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LOST SIR MASSINGBERD.

PREFATORY.

IN these days, when every man and woman becomes an author upon the least provocation, it is not necessary to make an apology for appearing in print. Perhaps there was always something affected in those prefatorial justifications; although they did disclaim any literary merit, it is probable that the writers would have been indignant enough had the critics taken them at their word; and perhaps the publication was not entirely owing to 'the warmly-expressed wishes of numerous friends.' But, at all events, we have done with all such excuses now. Not to have written anything for the press, is no small claim to being an Original. Neither sex nor age seems to exempt from the universal passion of authorship. My niece, Jessie (*etat.* sixteen), writes heart-rending narratives for the *Liliputian Magazine*; her brother, whom I have always looked upon as a violent, healthy hobbledohoy, whose highest virtue was Endurance, and whose darkest experience was Skittles, produces the most thrilling romances for the *Home Companion*. Even my housekeeper makes no secret of forwarding her most admired recipes to the *Family Intelligencer*; while my stable-boy, it is well known, is a prominent poetical contributor to the *Turf Times*, having also the gift of prophecy with reference to the winner of all the racing events of any importance. And yet, I believe, my household is not more addicted to publication than those of my neighbours.

What becomes of authors by profession in such a state of things literary as this, I shudder to think; I feel it almost a sin to add one more to the long list of competitors with whom they have to struggle; but still, if I do not now set down the story which I have in my mind, I am certain that, sooner or later, my nephew will do so for me, and very likely spoil it in the telling. He writes in a snappy, jerky, pyrotechnic way, which they tell me is now popular, but which is not suited to my old-fashioned taste; and although he dare not

make, at present, what he calls 'copy' of the stories with which I am perhaps too much accustomed to regale his ears, he keeps a note-book, and a new terror is added to Death from that circumstance. When I am gone, he will publish my best things, under some such title as *After-dinner Tales*, I feel certain; and they will appear at the railway book-stalls in a yellow cover bordered with red, or with even a frontispiece displaying a counterfeit and libellous presentment of his departed relative in the very act of narration. The gem of that collection would undoubtedly be the story which I am now about to anticipate the young gentleman by relating myself. If I am somewhat old-world in my style, perhaps it may be forgiven me, in consideration of the reality of the circumstances narrated, and the very strong interest which I do not doubt they will arouse.

It is not necessary to state the exact locality where they occurred, nor the number of years which have elapsed since their occurrence; it is enough to premise that what I tell is true, and that the principal personages in the—well, the melodrama, if you will—are yet alive, and will peruse these words before they meet the public eye. If nothing therein offends *them*, therefore, it need not, upon the score of indiscreet revelation at least, offend my readers.

CHAPTER I.—GIANT DESPAIR.

In a midland county, not as yet scarred by factories, there stands a village called Fairburn, which, at the time I knew it first—many, many years ago—had for its squire, its lord, its despot, one Sir Massingberd Heath. Its rector, at that date, was the Rev. Matthew Long; and at the Rectory, when my story commences, there was in pupillage to the said rector a youth, one Peter Meredith, who has since grown up to be the present writer. When we are small, all things seem vast to our young minds; good men

are saints, and evil ones are demons. I loved Mr Long, therefore, although he was my tutor; and oh, how I feared and hated Sir Massingberd! It was not, however, my boyhood alone that caused me to hold this man as a monster of iniquity; it was the opinion which the whole county entertained of him, more or less. The people of Fairburn trembled before him, as a ship's company before some cruel captain of fifteen years back—I mean, of fifteen years before the period of which I write. Press-gangs had not very long ceased to do their cruel mission; there were old men in our village who had served their time in His Majesty's ships, very much against their will; there were gaps in poor families still, which might or might not be filled up; empty chairs, that had so stood for a score of years perhaps, waiting for still expected occupiers; fathers of families, or the props of families, in sons and brothers, had been spirited away from Fairburn, even a little while ago, and had not come back again yet. They had been poachers, or radicals, or sectaries (as dissenters were then called), or something else distasteful to Sir Massingberd's father; and they had been carried off to sea at his command. Let not my young readers imagine that I am exaggerating matters; I write of a state of things of which they have not the remotest conception, but which I remember perfectly well. They have reason to thank Heaven that they did not live in those times, if they happen to belong to those unprosperous classes which were then termed collectively, 'the mob'; there were no such things as 'skilled workmen,' or 'respectable artisans,' in those days. The 'people' were 'the Great Unwashed.' To build a Crystal Palace for such as they were held to be, would have seemed to be the height of folly; they would have taken no other pleasure in it than to smash every pane with brick-bats—for were they not 'the dangerous classes.' Such opinions were beginning to die out, indeed, but they were held still by many great people, and Sir Massingberd Heath was one of these. Reared in a clergyman's family, and a clergyman myself, I have been a conservative in politics all my life, and in that belief I shall die; but rank and power are no excuse with me for evil deeds. In the chamber of my nephew John, who 'takes in everything,' as the phrase goes, I once discovered a democratic magazine, edited by a gentleman whose surname I forget, but who had a great multitude of initials. All the poor people described in this work were pious and moral, and all the rich people were infidel and profligate; but for the noblemen—and there were a good many persons of high rank in the various stories—were reserved all the choicest invectives and most superlative abuse. Nothing, of course, can be more unfair than this treatment of a class of persons who, considering their temptations, are really more than respectable. As a general rule, the portraits were extravagantly malicious, but they had this attraction for me—they were all exceedingly like Sir Massingberd Heath. He was the very type of that bloated aristocracy that is held up, in scarecrow fashion, by republican writers. There were not many living specimens to be met with even at the date of my tale, and the old baronet, perhaps himself perceiving that he was one of the last of them, determined that he should not be the least in infamy. Like the Unjust Judge, he neither feared God nor regarded Man, and, worse

than he, he would not perform a good action on account of the impotency of any person. She must have been a brave woman who importuned Sir Massingberd Heath, and could scarcely have been brought up in Fairburn.

Whether George IV. was king or not, at the period of which I write, it matters not, for his connection with our squire had terminated years before; but at one time they had been fast, very fast friends. When a king and a baronet run a race of extravagance, the king generally wins, and so it had been in this case; his Majesty, or rather his Royal Highness the Regent, had distanced Sir Massingberd, and they were not now upon even speaking-terms. Friendships of this sort do not last when one of the parties has spent all his money. What was the use of a poor man at White's who could only look on while his old friends played whist for one hundred pound points, and five hundred pounds upon the rubber? What business—let alone pleasure—could one have in London, when Howard and Gibbs would not lend one fifty pounds even at fifty per cent.? Sir Massingberd had left that gay, wicked world for good, that is to say, for ever, and was obliged to live at his beautiful country-seat in spite of himself. He was irretrievably ruined, so far as his court prospects were concerned, for he had no ready money. He owned all Fairburn, and many hundreds of rich acres about it, beside the Park and the River; he had the great tithes of the place, and manorial rights (which he exercised, too) innumerable. Nobody quite knew—he did not know himself—what privileges he had or had not, what pathways he could close at pleasure, what heriots he could demand, or what precise property he had in Fairburn gravel-pits; but in all cases he gave himself the benefit of the doubt. It was a very foolish thing to leave any disputed point to the sense of justice, or the good-feeling of our squire, and yet this was generally done. Where it was not done, where some honest fellow had ventured to oppose his high prerogative, even though he gained his end, he was always, as the village-people said, 'paid out' for it. I don't mean to say Sir Massingberd murdered him—although he would have done that, I am confident, without the slightest scruple, if it could have been effected with safety to himself—but he took his revenge of him, sooner or later, in a very simple way. He caught his children trespassing—having caused them to be enticed upon his land—and committed them to prison; or he broke down his fences, and spoiled his corn in the night; for he had dependents devoted to his wicked will, and upon whose false-witness he could always rely.

And yet, with all this power, the baronet, as I have said, was a poor man; he had borrowed all the money he could, and was even said to have overreached the London Jews in these transactions; and it was all gone—absolutely all. It was seldom that this great lord of acres had a ten-pound note in his pocket, for his house and land were all entailed upon his nephew Marmaduke, and he had only a life-interest in anything. Poverty perhaps made him bitterer and more savage than he would otherwise have been; but, for my part, I cannot imagine him to have been agreeable under any circumstances. I have heard, however, that at Carlton House he was once the first favourite—after Brummell—and that, of course, made him sought

after by many people. He had a wicked wit, which was doubtless acceptable in some circles, and his tongue, it may be, was not quite so coarse in those days of prosperity. He took a delight in his old age in retailing his infamous experiences, before women, if possible, and if not, before clergymen or boys. I remember to have heard of Mr Long once venturing to reprove his squire upon an occasion of this very kind. The rector had been dining at the Hall—an exceptional occurrence, and under exceptional circumstances—when, after dinner, the host began one of his disgraceful reminiscences, whereupon my tutor rose and said: ‘Sir Massingberd, you should be ashamed to talk of such matters to me; but before this boy, it is infamous. I thank you for your hospitality; but I shall go home.’

‘Very well; go, and be hanged!’ replied the baronet; ‘and Marmaduke and I will make a jolly night of it.’

Marmaduke Heath was Mr Long’s pupil as well as myself, and he resided with his uncle at the Hall. He would very much rather have retired with his tutor on that occasion, and indeed have resided at the Rectory, for he dreaded his relative beyond measure. All the pretended frankness with which the old man sometimes treated the boy was unable to hide the hate with which Sir Massingberd really regarded him; but for this heir-presumptive to the entail, this milk-and-water lad of seventeen, the baronet might raise money to any extent, nay, sell all Fairburn if he chose, and so might once more take his rightful station in the world, and rejoin the Four-in-hand Club, and demand his ‘revenge’ from Lord Thanet at *écarté*. He could still drink, for the cellars of Fairburn Hall were well-nigh inexhaustible; but if that chit of a lad was but carried off, he might have the best in the land to drink with him. It is true that a ruined man in Sir Massingberd’s position can still afford a good table; game is plentiful with him, and fish, and he grows his own mutton and venison, so that neither himself nor his friends need starve; but servants must be maintained to wait upon these, and a great country-house without a carriage is as a lobster without a claw. Consequently, except in the shooting-season, there were no guests at Fairburn Hall; the folks that did come were men of a certain stamp, current, indeed, in good society, but only in that of males; a real lady had not set foot in the Park, far less the house, for the last twelve years; the manner in which Sir Massingberd lived forbade such a thing. A few bachelors of the County Hunt, and half-a-dozen roués from town, were all the company that could be enticed to Fairburn in September and October; all the rest of the year, the grass grew in the avenue untouched by wheel or hoof, and even sprang up among the stone steps that led to the front-door. Somehow or other, I never saw it thus without thinking of the parable of the Sower and the Seed, with some distant and uncharitable reference to our squire! I wondered whether it was possible that in any far-back time any good seed of any sort had found its way into the crannies of his stony heart, and if so, what had become of it. I used to try and picture that violent, wicked man as a child in his cot, or saying his prayers at his mother’s knee. I believe she had died soon after her marriage, and that, short as her wedded life had been, it was a very unhappy one.

Fairburn Hall had never been a house for tender,

honest women; the Heaths, who are celebrated, like another noble race of the same sort, for their hard hearts and excellent digestions, had never been good husbands. Fortunately, daughters were rare in the family. How Sir Massingberd would have brought up a daughter, I shudder to think. One son had been the sole offspring vouchsafed to the baronets of this line for many generations, except the last; and in the present case, there was no such direct heir. Some said Sir Massingberd had married secretly, but was separated from his wife, and some said he had not; but it seemed somehow certain that with him the immediate succession from father to son would cease. His brother Gilbert had married young in Italy, and had died in that country within the same year. His widow had brought his posthumous child, when a few months old, to the Hall, at the invitation of Sir Massingberd, and had remained there for some time. The villagers still spoke of the dark foreign lady as being the most beautiful creature they had ever beheld; the Park keepers used to come upon her in solitary glades, singing sweetly, but ah! so sorrowfully, to her child in a tongue that they did not understand. The baronet himself was absent, not yet cast out of the court whirlpool, and the lonely vastness of the place was not displeasing to the young widow, wishing, perhaps, to be left undisturbed with her grief; but after Sir Massingberd came down, she remained but a very few days. It was said that she fled with her babe in a winter’s night, and that her little footprints were traced in the snow to the cross-roads where the mail went by, by which she had arrived. She was not rich, and had come down in a manner quite different from that of her brother-in-law, who, broken and ruined though he was, had posted with four horses. That was how all gentlefolks of the country travelled in those days; even the very barristers on circuit indulged, and were obliged to do so, in a chaise and a pair. The mother of Marmaduke Heath, however, who was heir-presumptive to the largest landed property in Midshire, was very poor. Whether the late baronet had omitted to make a proper provision for his younger son, or whether Gilbert had made away with it after the usual manner of the Heaths, I do not know; but his widow and child betook themselves into Devonshire—selected, perhaps, from its climate approaching nearer than any other part of England to that of her native land—and there lived in a very humble fashion. How Marmaduke ever got into his uncle’s hands, I never could clearly understand; his mother had died suddenly, whereupon the family lawyer, Mr Clint of Russell Square, who had the entire management of the Heath property, had in the first instance taken possession of the lad; but Sir Massingberd had claimed his right to be the guardian of his nephew, and it could not be disallowed. Such were mainly the circumstances, I believe; but all sorts of stories were in circulation concerning ‘Giant Despair,’ as the savage old baronet was called, and his nephew; the general opinion agreeing only upon one point—that no sane person would change places with Master Marmaduke Heath at Doubting Castle, notwithstanding the greatness of his expectations.

CHAPTER II.—MY FIRST INTERVIEW.

My own history has little or nothing to do with the present narrative, and therefore I will not

allude to it, except where it is absolutely necessary. Suffice it to say, that my parents were in India, and that for many years Fairburn Rectory was my home. I had no vacations, in the sense that the word is generally understood to mean; I had nowhere else to go to, nor did I wish to go anywhere. No father could have been kinder, or have done his duty better by me, than did Mr Long. How poor Marmaduke used to envy me my wardship to that good man! I well remember the first day I came to Fairburn. It was early summer; its great woods were in all their glory; and to me, fresh from shipboard and the vast waste of sea, the place seemed a bower of bliss. First, the gray old Church-tower upon the hill; and then the turrets of the Hall, half-hidden in oak; and last, the low-roofed, blossom-entangled Cottage where I found so bright a welcome—that was the order in which Fairburn was introduced to visitors from town. The Church, and the Hall, and the Rectory all lay together; the churchyard, dark with yews, encroached upon the Rectory garden; and that bright spot, so trimly kept, that one was moved to pick up a fallen leaf, if such were on its lawn, sloped down into the heart of the Park. A light iron railing, with wires to prevent the hairs and rabbits from entering in and nibbling the flowers, alone divided the great man's land from Mr Long's trim demesne. The deer came up and pushed their velvet horns against it. In copse and fern, twinkled the innumerable ear and tail. I had never seen such animals before, and they delighted me hugely. After dinner, on the very day that I arrived, I fed them through the rails, and they ate the bread from my open hand.

'They take you for Marmaduke,' said Mr Long smiling; 'for otherwise, they would be shy of a stranger.'

'And who is Marmaduke, sir?'

'He is your fellow-pupil, and I make no doubt will be your friend. I wish that he was resident with me, like yourself; but his uncle, who lives at the Hall yonder, will not part with him. He reads with me morning and afternoon, however.'

'Does he like reading, sir?' inquired I with hesitation, for I for my part did not. My education, such as it was, had been fitful, incomplete, and in a word, Indian; and I had come back much older than most European boys have to come home, a sad dunce.

'Yes, Marmaduke is very fond of reading,' pursued my tutor; 'that is, reading of a certain sort. He always does his work well with me, so I must not be hard on him; but he is certainly too fond of novels. And yonder he comes, see, with a book in his hand, even as he walks.' My tutor pointed to the Park; and there, coming slowly down a long, broad 'ride,' with his eyes fixed upon a volume he held in his hand, was a youth of seventeen years old or so, which was about my own age. As he came nearer, I began to see why the deer had mistaken me for him; not, indeed, because he was very handsome (which was not at all the case with me), but inasmuch as his complexion was as olive as my own.

'Why, he has been to India too!' whispered I to my tutor, rather disappointed than otherwise, for I had had enough of Indian playmates, and to spare.

'No,' returned he in the same low voice; 'his mother was an Italian.'

Then he introduced us; and I began to hang my head, and play with the buttons of my waistcoat,

as is the graceful manner of hobble-de-hoys upon such a ceremony; but Marmaduke, completely self-possessed, asked about my journey, and particularly what I had seen at sea. He knew so much about sharks and porpoises, that I thought he must have made some long voyage himself; but he told me that such was not the case.

'But I should like to go to sea of all things,' said he; 'and I would cruise about that cape—what's its name?—until I met with the *Flying Dutchman*: that is the vessel which I wish to see.'

'I have never heard of her,' said I, proud of that nautical use of the feminine. 'Is she one of the Company's ships?'

At this, my tutor began to rub his hands and chuckle inwardly, as was his wont when vastly amused; but perceiving that the colour came into my cheeks, he laid his hand upon my shoulder kindly, and said that he was glad to find my head, at least, was not stuck full of foolish stories, as some people's heads were; while Marmaduke, without triumphing in the least over my ignorance, explained to me all about that Phantom Ship, which glides full sail upon the astonished voyager, and passes through his vessel without shock or noise. He told the tale exactly as if he had heard it straight from the lips of an eye-witness, and believed it himself; he never laughed, and if he smiled, he seemed to be sorry that he had done so directly afterwards. Some melancholy thought appeared to occupy his mind at all times; and if a bright fancy crossed it, it was but for an instant, like lightning through the cloud. I am not describing an 'interesting' youth, after the manner of romance-writers; no 'secret sorrow' obscured the young existence of Marmaduke Heath, but simply, as I subsequently discovered, vulgar, abject terror. His whole being was oppressed by reason of one man. The shadow of Sir Massingberd cast itself over him alike when he went out from his hated presence and when he was about to return to it. He was never free from its nightmare influence—never. His passion for reading was not so much a love of books, as a desire to escape in them from the circumstances of his actual life. If he ever forgot him in earnest talk—and he was the most earnest talker, as a boy, I ever knew—the mention of his uncle's name was a Medusa's Head to turn him into stony silence on the instant. If Marmaduke Heath could only have got away from Fairburn Hall when I first knew him, his mind might have regained its natural vigour and elasticity; but as it was, it grew more sombre and morbid every day. His hungry intellect was nourished upon what associations happened to be at hand, and they were very unhealthy food. The wickedness of Sir Massingberd was, of course, sufficiently present to him, like some hateful picture hung at a bed's foot, which the eyes of a sleepless man cannot avoid; while every tongue about the Hall was ready to tell him of the evil deeds of his forefathers. At first, I thought my young friend's constant allusion to his family was the result of aristocratic pride, although, indeed, there was nothing to be proud of in what he told me, but very much the reverse; but I soon found that this was not the case. The history of the Heaths was what interested him most of all histories, and he favoured me with extracts from it solely upon that account. As for the fact of their noble blood running in his own veins, he would, I am confident, have far rather been the son

of Mrs Myrtle, the kind old housekeeper at the Rectory.

'We are a doomed race, Peter,' he once said to me, not long after we had made friendship with one another. 'Generation after generation of us have sinned and sinned. The Corsicans have their family feuds transmitted to them, but they are hostile only to their fellow-men; the Heaths have ever fought against Heaven itself. Each successor to the title seems to have said, like the descendants of Tubal Cain :

"We will not hear, we will not know,
The God that was our father's foe."

There's the Church,' said he, pointing to that glorious pile, which, at Fairburn, was almost a cathedral in magnitude and beauty, 'and there is the Hall. They are antagonistic; they are devoted to opposite purposes. I tell you, yes; our family residence is consecrated to the devil.'

I am afraid I could not help laughing at this singular notion.

'Nay,' cried he, looking round him furtively, 'but you shall see that it is so.' We were in the Rectory garden, which communicated with the churchyard by a wicket. He led the way into it; and in a distant corner, upon the north side of the chancel, he shewed me a sombre burying-ground, separated from the rest of the God's-acre, and imprisoned in dark purgatorial rails. 'Do you know why we are all put there,' asked he, 'instead of with the other Christian folks?'

'You are too proud to lie with the poor, perhaps,' returned I, who had still that idea in my mind with regard to Marmaduke himself.

'No,' said he; 'it is not that—it is because the Heaths will not be buried in consecrated ground.'

'But you have a family-vault underneath the chancel, have you not?'

'Yes; but it is not "smug lying." None of us have been put there since old Sir Hugh, in Queen Anne's time. When they opened the vault for him, they found his father's coffin with its plate to the ground. It had turned over. The witty parson would have it that it was only natural that it should have done so, since its tenant, during life, had fought alternately for Parliament and King, and was addicted to changing sides. But when Sir Hugh's successor demanded lodging in the place in his turn, they found Sir Hugh's coffin had turned over likewise. This circumstance so terrified the dead man's heir—who had not been on the best terms with him during life, and perhaps thought he owed him some amends—that he swore his father should not lie in such restless company; and as the late baronet had been at feud with the then rector, he determined to dispense with any assistance from the church at all, and buried him in an adjoining field, which was subsequently made the last resting-place of all our race, as you perceive. The burial-service is dispensed with, of course. It would be mere mockery to address such words as Hope and Faith to the corpse of a Heath of Fairburn.'

'My dear Marmaduke,' said I, 'you make my very blood run cold. But surely you exaggerate these things. Some of your people have been Catholics, and been buried in their own chapel at the Hall, have they not?'

'Only one of them,' replied the boy with bitterness. 'My great-grandfather, Sir Nicholas, abjured his infidelity, and became a papist, in order to

secure his bride. He turned the chapel into a banqueting-hall, however, and used the sacramental plate in his unholy revels; but after death, the priests got hold of him at last, and "Nick the Younger," as he was called, now lies under the altar which he so often profaned. The beginning of his funeral-ceremonies was not conducted so decently as the last rites. He had got outlawed, I believe, or, at all events, was driven abroad in his latter days, and died there. Nobody at Fairburn had heard of him for many months, when one October night, as Oliver Bradford, who is now the head-keeper, but was then a very young man, was watching in the home-preserves, he heard a terrible noise in the high-road, and making his way out, came upon this spectacle: two men in black, and upon black horses, rode by him at full speed, and close behind them came a hearse-and-four, likewise at the gallop. The plumes upon it waved backwards, he says, like corn, and all the black trappings of the thing fluttered and flapped as it went by. Another man on horseback, singing to himself a drunken song, closed this horrid procession. It moved up towards the village, and Oliver listened to it until the noise seemed to cease about opposite to the Park gates. The solitary witness, frightened enough before, was now doubly terrified, for he made sure that what he had seen was the news of Sir Nicholas's decease, brought over in this ghastly and characteristic fashion. He did not for a single moment imagine that it was a palpable vision; and yet he had seen a veritable funeral pass by. The old baronet had died in France, leaving directions, and the money to carry them out, that his corpse should be taken at night, and at full gallop, through every town that lay between Dover and Fairburn.—Alive or dead,' added Marmaduke grimly, 'the Heaths are a charming family.'

'At all events, my dear fellow,' said I, laying my hand upon his arm, 'you will have nothing to fear from comparison with your forefathers. You may make a good reputation at a cheap price.* A very little virtue will go a great way with the next tenant of Fairburn Hall, if half the tales we hear be true.'

'And what tales are those?' inquired a deep low voice at my very elbow.

I believe I jumped a foot or two in the air myself, so great was my alarm; but as for my companion, if those grass-grown tombs which we were contemplating had given up their wicked skeletons before his eyes, he could not have exhibited a greater excess of terror.

Beside me stood a man of herculean proportions, who, by his dress, might have been taken for an under-gamekeeper, but for a very massive gold chain which hung from the top button-hole of his waistcoat down to its deep-flapped pocket. What is now, I believe, called an 'Albert guard,' resembles it on a smaller scale; but at the time I speak of,

* I am told by an able friend who is good enough to revise for me this manuscript, that it is not likely that a mere boy, as I then was, would have made such an observation as the above. I do not doubt that this remark is altogether just; but I am afraid it will apply to so much else in this narrative, that it is scarcely worth while to make an alteration. I am not used to literary composition; I cannot weigh whether this or that is characteristic of a speaker. I am merely a garrulous person, who has, however, such a striking story to tell, that, I trust, the matter will atone for the manner.

such an ornament was altogether unique. His face, too, evidently belonged to one who was used to command. On the forehead was a curious indented curve like the letter U, while his lips curled contemptuously upwards also, in somewhat the same shape. The two together gave him a weird and indeed a demoniacal look, which his white beard, although long and flowing, had not enough of dignity to do away with. I had never heard Sir Massingberd's personal appearance described; but even if I had not had before me his shrinking nephew, I should have recognised at once the features of Giant Despair.

'And what tales are those which are told against the present tenant of Fairburn Hall?' reiterated the baronet, scanning me from head to foot with his cold glittering eyes. 'And who is this young gentleman who comes to listen to them from the lips of my loving ward?'

'Sir,' said I, 'your nephew was saying nothing whatever against you, I do assure you. I was merely referring to the gossip of the village, which, indeed, does not make you out to be entirely a saint.' I was angry at having been frightened by this man, who, after all, could not hurt me. I had been accustomed, too, to Indian life, which, without making one bolder than other people, indisposes one to submit to dictation, which is only the duty of the natives.

Sir Massingberd reached forth one iron finger, and rocked me with it to and fro, though I stood as firm as I could. 'Take care, young gentleman, take care,' said he; 'that spirit of yours will not do, down at Fairburn. Mr Long does not seem to have taught you humility, I think.—Marmaduke, go home.' He spoke these last words exactly as a man speaks to his dog who has injudiciously followed him to church on Sunday, in the hope that he was bent on partridge-shooting.

The boy instantly obeyed. He shrank away, passing as closely to the churchyard railing as he could, as though he almost feared a blow from his uncle.

'There is humility—there is docility!' sneered the baronet, looking after him. 'And if I had you up at the Hall, my young bantam, for four-and-twenty hours or so, I'd make you docile too.' He strode away with a laugh like the creaking of an iron hinge, for he saw that I did not dare to answer him—he strode away over the humble graves, setting his foot deep into their daisied mounds, as though in scorn, and his laugh echoed again and again from the sepulchral walls, for it was joy to Sir Massingberd Heath to know that he was feared.

THE LEARNED PROFESSIONS IN AMERICA.

IN the absence of a hereditary aristocracy in America, it seems but natural that the members of the learned professions should occupy a higher relative position than in most civilised countries. It must be remembered, however, that there is really an aristocracy in every society, and upper, middle, and lower classes. There may be no hereditary titles; there may be no laws of primogeniture or entails of property; but still there are old, distinguished, and wealthy families in America, not without a certain recognised *prestige* and position. Take, for example, the Lees, Randolphs, and Masons of Virginia, and the Van

Courtlandts and Livingstons of New York. There are many families in America whose founders, two hundred years ago, were possessed of landed estates so large, that all subsequent divisions have not sufficed to reduce them to poverty. Nay, the land has increased in value, immensely in some cases, where great cities have been built upon tracts which, even half a century ago, could have been bought for a few shillings an acre.

But an aristocracy of birth, however respected, as it naturally is, becomes rare and exceptional, when unprotected by law. The tendency of great estates is to melt away by continual division. Large families seem the natural order of things in new countries. Population increases where it finds room to increase; not, it would seem, from the removal of those checks of which political economists treat, but from some subtle influence of the principle of supply and demand upon the reproductive functions. Whatever the cause may be, the fact is undoubted that settlers in new countries have large families. A hereditary aristocracy being exceptional, and scarcely known in large districts of the New World, some other became a social necessity. Men will have leaders. Even an Equality Club must have its president and its favourite orators; and those who are most earnest and eloquent in the advocacy of a perfect equality, are the most honoured and looked up to by their disciples. In a democracy, he who talks loudest of equal rights, has the best chance of being chosen to rule over his fellows.

In the organisation of a peaceful society, it is natural that the members of the three learned professions, 'Law, Physic, and Divinity,' should take the highest rank, and form a genuine and spontaneously-recognised aristocracy. I place the names as I find them, but it is hard to say how they came to be in that order. It was otherwise in the beginning: the priest came first, then the doctor, and at last, with social needs, the lawyer. Among savages, the strongest and bravest man is chief. In warlike times, the soldier is the recognised leader of men. In America, until quite recently, wars have been rare, and military chieftains, as such, not in special favour. Washington was made President at the close of the War of Independence, but he was quite as much a statesman as a soldier; and it is to be noticed that, though he was surrounded by able generals, no one of them succeeded him in the presidential office. The five succeeding Presidents were civilians—three of the five, like himself, Virginians. The war of 1812 with England gave America a second military President in General Jackson; but he had also been a lawyer, a judge, and a governor of a state, as well as a successful soldier. The Mexican war brought forward another military President, in the person of General Taylor, whose only claim to the office was the popularity which came of a hard-fought field and a decisive victory.

As a rule, however, civilians in America have had it their own way, and four-fifths of all the offices of the State and Federal governments have been filled by lawyers. As lawyers are supposed to understand laws, it seemed natural that they should be selected to make them. There were no men born to be legislators, as with the members of the House of Lords in this country; and very rarely were there to be found men of large property and influence, who were looked upon as the natural

representatives of the people of the country, in the popular branch of the legislature, as with the county members in the House of Commons. There was, indeed, something like this with respect to the old cavalier families of the South, and the large planters who had a taste for politics; but there was very little of it among the northern descendants of the Puritans. The 'smart' village-lawyer, who could make a glib and plausible speech at town-meeting, was sent to the state legislature. When he had made a certain amount of political capital, he might hope to be elected to the more important post of member of Congress, or even state senator at the Federal capital; but as there were but two senators to each state, this became a high and coveted honour, and the reward of long and distinguished service.

The profession of the law, it will be seen, has been in America not only, as elsewhere, the road to wealth, but to political power and distinction. The ambitious young men of the country became lawyers; having this vantage-ground at starting, they were ready for whatever career might open. Martin Van Buren, a lawyer of Kinderhook, a small Dutch village in New York, was President; James K. Polk, a village-lawyer in Tennessee, of no extraordinary abilities, was President, and added New Mexico and California to the Union; John Tyler of Virginia, and Millard Fillmore of New York, two obscure lawyers, elected Vice-presidents, became Presidents by the deaths of General Harrison and General Taylor; Frank Pierce, an amiable and clever, but by no means famous New Hampshire lawyer, was elected President over General Scott, at that time the most distinguished living soldier in America; and finally, Abraham Lincoln, an obscure village-lawyer in Illinois, is the actual President of what remains of the great republic. American lawyers have also filled the diplomatic service of the United States; lawyers have had the best appointments in the customs; lawyers have been made governors of states and territories; and now a large portion of the officers in the Federal army are lawyers. Stanton, secretary of war; Halleck, commander-in-chief; Banks, Butler, Dix, Sickles, and scores of others, in high military positions are lawyers.

It is hardly necessary to say that the law is a highly-respected profession. That which gives money, position, rank, power, distinction, cannot fail to be respected. True, the law in America lacks some of the adventitious dignities that surround it here. The American lawyer wears no wig; or if a wig, it is made to look as much as possible like natural hair. An unwigged bench listens to an unwigged bar. An English lawyer, in wig and gown, making his appearance in an American law-court, would be greeted with shouts of laughter, which no crier could silence. No; the American judge sits upon the bench in his usual morning and evening costume, and lawyers dress in black broadcloth, only because it is the almost universal American wear. In the wilder regions of the South and West, judges may be seen arrayed in coarse home-spun, brown-dyed with butternut bark.

There are as few restrictions to the entrance upon the profession, as there are formalities, other than legal, in its practice. If a young man wishes to be a lawyer, there is nothing to hinder him, provided he can read. No other education is requisite. Let him pitch into his Blackstone forthwith. Andy Johnson, late senator

from, and now Federal governor of Tennessee, was a tailor, and could not read until his wife taught him. He studied law, became member of Congress, governor, senator. One could find a score of such examples. President Lincoln never had a year's schooling, even of the roughest elementary kind; but he learned to read, borrowed Coke on Littleton, and was admitted to the bar. In some of the states, there are rules which require a certain period of reading, and an examination; but these rules are lax and variable. A few months of study, with any decent aptitude, will accomplish the business.

The profession of the Law in America also differs from that of Europe in the lack of grades. The only distinctions are between good and bad, sharp and dull, successful and unsuccessful. The same man may do the work of attorney, solicitor, counsellor, and practise in every court, from that of the police-magistrate to the supreme court of the United States. It is true that some lawyers select specialties for which they are specially fitted. In law-firms, there is a division of labour; still, a lawyer is expected to attend to every department of the law.

With this facility in entering the profession, and wide range of employment in it, and the chances of preferment in and out of it, one would naturally expect to find a vast number of lawyers. The country is crowded with them. Young men of fortune study law, because it is not reputable to be an idler—to have no business or profession. Men study law as an introduction to politics. There is free competition; and those who give the most satisfaction to clients, or in any way make a reputation, get the bulk of the business. The rest live as they can, or take to other callings. If a man cannot succeed as a lawyer, he not unfrequently becomes a clergyman; while not a few clergymen, finding, after a fair trial, that they have mistaken their vocations, study law, and make their appeals to juries instead of congregations.

The profession of medicine could scarcely fail to flourish in a country subject to many and violent diseases. In the East, are consumption and fevers; in the West, intermittents; and in the South, congestive and yellow fevers. The employment of doctors and the consumption of drugs is greater, without doubt, than in any country in the world. Every state legislature has chartered medical colleges for the education of young gentlemen in medicine and surgery. That supply may follow demand, there are homœopathic as well as allopathic colleges; and not only these, but botanic, Thomsonian or steam, hydropathic, &c. In most of the states, the laws make no distinction, and in some, not even a diploma from any college is required. A man has only to announce himself a doctor, and to practise upon any system or no system. The right of private judgment in matters of physic, as well as of faith, is the popular and prevailing doctrine; still there is, it must be confessed, a certain degree of prejudice in favour of something like a regular medical education, and especially a regular diploma. It is, therefore, the custom of young men, and of some young women, wishing to undertake to cure the sick, to enter their names in a physician's office, and attend two courses of lectures. A month's steady cramming, at the end of a supposed three years' course of reading, and the payment of moderate fees, enables almost every one to pass the hasty examination and receive that wonderful roll of parchment—the diploma—which not one in

twenty can read, which therefore can scarcely be said to tell any lies.

The profession of medicine brings a certain social dignity, and often considerable profit, attended, however, with hard work, and much anxiety. In large towns, there may be specialities. Some men choose surgery; some are distinguished for the treatment of particular diseases; there are no 'medical men'; all are doctors, all M.D.s, with the highest pretensions in the profession, and, as a rule, the American physician does everything, and attends to every call. He pulls an aching tooth, or ties the carotid artery; he is equally called to lance a felon, or superintend the increase of population. In the country, he is apothecary as well as surgeon, physician, dentist, and *accoucheur*. He carries a pair of saddle-bags stuffed with drugs and instruments—pills, powders, potions, rhubarb and aloes, calomel and magnesia, cubebs and sassa-parilla, ether and asafetida, diacalon and cantharides, all jammed together with many miles of jolting over rough roads on the saddle or in the sulky.

Liable to be called at any hour of day or night, and to travel in sparsely-inhabited districts over an area of two or three hundred square miles, with no leave of absence, the physician, whatever his personal popularity, cannot indulge in political ambition until he is ready to retire from practice. People will not elect a popular physician to the state legislature or to Congress, for the good reason that they want him at home. If the men could spare him, the women could not, and that settles the question.

No profession in America, perhaps none in the world, is more devoted, or makes more sacrifices in the way of duty, than this of medicine, and one cannot but regret that so much of irregularity and uncertainty attends it. There is no acknowledged rule, no recognised science. This does not apply to the mechanical part of the profession. There cannot be much question about the best modes of reducing dislocations, setting broken bones, tying arteries, operating for strangulated hernia, &c.; here all is plain and clear sailing; but when we come to the treatment of diseases, and the rival claims of allopathy, homœopathy, &c., or the various schools into which these formidable *pathies* are divided, we are all at sea, without chart or compass. Call six scientific and estimable gentlemen to a case of any obscurity, and the chances are that you have six different results of their diagnosis. No two, perhaps, will agree as to the organ diseased, or the nature of the disease. Suppose they agree, or come to agree, on this point, what next? Let each one make out his prescription without consulting the others, and you may have six different modes of treatment. This happens in some degree everywhere of course; but in America, there is wilder confusion than elsewhere. It often happens that the professors in the same college teach different theories of physiology and pathology, and violently urge the employment of different therapeutical systems. One professor at the ten o'clock lecture tells you to bleed and blister; at twelve, you are warned against lancet and leech, and advised to resort to diffusive stimulants and cold affusion. Every one must feel his way, do the best he can, and as little mischief as possible. We have the consolation of knowing that diseases kill and nature cures under every possible system.

I wish to touch very lightly on the other of the three professions, the clerical, as it exists in America. It flourishes under peculiar circumstances. In the first place, there is no established church, or any religious system recognised by the Federal or state governments. There is indeed a vague recognition of Christianity. The daily sessions of Congress and the state legislatures are opened with prayer; there is a legal observance of Sunday; the President and governors issue proclamations for fasts and thanksgivings; chaplains are appointed to the army and navy. But there is no church-establishment; there is no compulsory support of churches or ministers; the voluntary system is in full operation, and all denominations are equal before the law. To satisfy all parties, it is common to invite the ministers of Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Baptist, and Methodist churches to officiate in turn in the daily prayers of legislative bodies.

This system, or no system, gives the largest liberty in matters of religion, but it also leaves the community without any standard of clerical acquirement or character. Portions of the clergy are highly educated—larger portions have scarcely any education whatever. Worldly learning, in some large sects, is thought to be a detriment to the exercise of the ministerial vocation. Probably, not one-fourth of the American clergy have received anything like a regular or classical education. A still smaller proportion has had any training for the ministry. Lawyers, merchants, mechanics, persons of various pursuits, either unable to succeed in business, or feeling a vocation to preach, get ordained as ministers, after the customs of the different denominations. In the same way, clergymen, dissatisfied with the pulpit, become lawyers, politicians, lecturers, daguerreotypists, auctioneers, peddlers, teachers, steam-boat captains or army-officers, according to their tastes and capacities. Hundreds of clergymen take the stump in political campaigns, and numbers are elected to various offices.

In the Protestant Episcopal Church, which follows the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England, the clergy are generally educated; but it receives many accessions from other professions. I can remember lawyers, editors, and artists, who have become Episcopal clergymen. There are denominations among the ministers of which one might find plenty of ex-blacksmiths, tailors, and shoemakers. The Roman Catholic clergy are educated everywhere upon nearly the same system—narrow, perhaps, but regular, and adapted to their needs. They must know Latin, and many learn French and German. It is common to find a priest who can converse with his parishioners in five or six languages. I know one who amuses his leisure hours with Sanscrit.

The great want of the clergy in America is religious unity. If they could all 'teach the same thing,' there would be no need of five or six churches or chapels in every little village, with a crowd of half-educated and half-supported preachers. The profession would be more respected if more united. It was never so little respected as now. Fifty years ago, the minister was a great man; now, if a popular preacher, he may be eagerly listened to; but the reverence for the cloth has much diminished. Religious liberty is a necessity of the age; but it can hardly be said that the multiplication of sects and

controversies tends to increase a respect for religion or its teachers. America is a field for great experiments in politics, morals, and religion. It is, perhaps, too early yet to draw conclusions. Another fact, bearing upon the position of the clergy in America, is deserving of consideration. As the people elect nearly all civil and judicial officers, so they choose their own spiritual guides, and change them as often as they like. The Roman Catholic priests are placed by their bishops, and the same is the case also, to a large extent, if not wholly, with the Methodist preachers; but with all other denominations, the people select, hire, and dismiss their pastors. They raise as much money as they think they can afford, and get the best man they can for their money. Having heard a good account of a preacher, they invite him to visit them; he preaches a few weeks on trial; then, if liked, and they can agree on terms, he is engaged for a year, and from year to year, until they are tired of him, or hear of some one they fancy might please them better. It follows that the minister must suit his congregation. If he offends them in manner or in matter, his living is in peril. He must not only go with a majority of his people, but, if possible, with all of them, and become all things to all men and women, or risk losing a part of his pew-rents. The more attractive his discourses, the greater the crowd, and the higher the yearly lettings of seats. The stars of the profession get from one to two thousand pounds salary, and perquisites, such as marriage-fees, payment for lectures, &c. The majority receive from one hundred to two hundred pounds. Many Methodist and Baptist preachers get a bare living, eked out with presents, and are often obliged to labour at farming or some handicraft.

From this view of the positions of the learned professions in America, the reader can form his own judgment of their relations to society, and influence upon the public welfare.

CHARLIE.

THE New Road, although a spacious thoroughfare, is certainly not a popular metropolitan region; one very seldom sees anybody in it. There are, indeed, gushes of people here and there from the great Underground stream that flows unseen beneath it, but these instantly drift away, north and south, and leave the long broad street more desolate than ever. An attempt has been made by a few enthusiastic furniture-dealers to mitigate the vacancy of the neighbourhood by emptying the contents of their shops into the roadway, but this shallow artifice altogether fails in its intention. Besides these, there are no other shops, properly so called. The Marylebone Workhouse cannot be termed a shop; nor the private Wild Beast Establishment, which has always excited my curiosity to the utmost, short of calling, in person, where (it is said) a genuine Bengal tiger answers the bell. There are plenty of houses, it is true, but I doubt whether they are dwelling-houses. I never see anybody go in or out, or any human countenance at the windows; and the long strips of melancholy ground that lie between them and the pavement are not laid out in gardens, but seem to await the time when the proprietor shall be respectably interred there, and the stone flags become grave-tablets. No; the New Road is certainly not a cheerful place to live in; but, on

the other hand, how exceedingly convenient for persons about to die! There is nothing to distract the mind in the shape of traffic, with the trifling exception of the Islington 'buses on their empty way to the Angel; while, if you are at all solicitous about a fitting memorial to be erected over your remains, there are the largest collections of mortuary emblems, on every side of you, awaiting your esteemed order. As poor Thomas Ingoldsby once quoted: '*Si monumentum requiris, Sir—come—spy—see.*' A gentleman with money in his purse, no matter how peculiar may be his posthumous vanity, has only to look about him in the New Road, to be made quite easy as to its being gratified. On the continent, and in the East, it is common enough to find whole streets devoted to one particular trade; but with the exception of Field Lane, where every shopkeeper used to sell other people's handkerchiefs, there was no such example of localised speciality in London, until the New Road was built. The melancholy which immediately marked this neighbourhood for her own, probably attracted the monument-makers. At all events, thither they came, and there they are, and probably will remain there as long as the human race derives satisfaction in being chieled.

But why should I say human? There are wolves, and lions, and stags in plenty to be found in the New Road, not only alive in the menagerie aforesaid, but in stone and 'compos'; and doubtless when the Crystal Palace Company wanted their Extinct Beasts, they gave their orders to artists in this locality, and the Labyrinthodon, the Paleotherium, and the Megalosaurus, were turned out by those ingenious persons with fidelity and dispatch. It is, however, the peculiarity of Man alone, the seeker-out of strange inventions, to embellish his last resting-place after this fashion; and the effigies of the less noble animals are not exhibited as monumental records of a wolf, or a deer, departed, but merely as works of art. Therefore was I greatly astonished, a few months ago, when passing by one of these groves of statuary—with the proprietor of which, one Mr Senotaff, I had some acquaintance—by perceiving a plaster of Paris lap-dog couchant, evidently as the headstone of a grave, and with the words *Charlie obiit February 1856. Sepultus est June 1863*, beneath it in gilt letters.

I inquired of the master-mason of this establishment, a grave man, engaged in the delicate operation of rounding a cherub, what this dog-Latin might mean—for it seemed so odd that a pet animal should die seven years before its friends took the trouble to bury it—and that artist, without interrupting his occupation in the least, was so good as to communicate to me the following interesting particulars.

'Well, sir, in our peculiar line of business,' observed the sculptor frankly, 'we meet occasionally with some very strange incidents; and the circumstances relating to that King Charles's spaniel were as remarkable as any I remember. I was sent for at the end of May last down to Twickenham, to undertake a mortuary job, as I understood, connected with a venerable lady—take care the chips don't get into your eye, sir—who had recently deceased at a house called Doddridge Villa. I anticipated that there would be some moulding or modelling work—a melancholy task, sometimes demanded of us by bereaved parties—and took down with me the necessary materials; but there was nothing of that sort to be done. Mrs

Nestor had been buried some days before my arrival, and some local—individual—had been intrusted with the construction of her monument. A mere table-cloth and tea-urn concern it turned out to be; but, however, that is neither here nor there.

'Certainly not *here*,' said I, 'Mr Senotaff,' looking round upon the prodigies of monumental skill by which I was surrounded.

The sculptor bowed, and resumed.

In spite of this want of respect, as I must still hold it to be, in the heir of this lamented lady, and consequent proprietor of Doddridge Villa, his regret for his late grandmother, in which relation Mrs Nestor stood to him, seemed very deep and genuine.

"I am indebted to that generous woman," observed he to me, "for almost everything that I possess; and I am sorry to say that I made but an ill return to her, while in life, for her great kindness. I am not even altogether free from the self-reproach of having hastened her end." Here the young man's frame, which was excessively stout, absolutely quivered with emotion—like blanc-mange.

"Hastened her end," replied I, "Mr Twentystone! Why, I hear she was ninety-two!"

"She was a great age, it is true," returned he; "but she would have lived much longer, I am convinced, had it not been for a certain deed of mine, to make atonement in some measure for which I have now sent for you. The late Mrs Nestor had a dog called Charlie—his picture, painted by Landseer, hangs on yonder wall—which she loved, I have no hesitation in saying, better than any other living creature, myself included. It was her companion by day and night, and had been so for very many years. It snapped and snarled at every other hand but hers—a peculiarity which perhaps endeared him all the more to his mistress, while it did not harm her friends, since he had not a tooth in his head to bite with. He was consequently fed upon soups and other easily-digested dainties, and grew very fat and lethargic. I am not quite certain," pursued Mr Twentystone reflectively, "whether a part of my grandmother's affection for myself was not due to the fact, that I resembled Charlie in temperament and physique. Of course, I was on as good terms with the favourite animal as he would permit me to be. It was not only a case of 'Love me, love my dog,' with my poor grandmother, but of 'Love my dog, or leave my house, and never set foot in it again.' She had disinherited my eldest brother, not (as she always averred) for treading upon Charlie's tail by accident, but for not calling the next day to make inquiries after the poor thing. She was a good woman; but if it had been in her power to commute the penalty of death to transportation, in the case of any one who had skimmed Charlie's new milk, or watered his *bowills*, I think she would have permitted the law to take its course. Be it far from me, however, to be severe upon my beloved grandmother. We have all our hobby-horses, Mr Senotaff, and hers was a dog."

"While my employer was wiping the tears from his eyes, I ventured to inquire what I could do for him, since I did not understand that I had heard anything yet of the object of my mission to Doddridge."

"Right, sir, right," quoth Mr Twentystone; "you remind me of my duty; you bid me no longer indulge in vain regret, but to set about making what reparation is still possible. I have sent for you to model that unhappy dog. The picture will

supply you with his external appearance; though his virtues can never be portrayed, and the only voice that could speak of them from personal experience is hushed for ever. I intend to raise a marble effigy above his resting-place beneath the cypress-tree on yonder lawn. You will come here daily, and study the beautiful animal's expression; but I cannot part with its likeness—no, not for an hour."

"I am sure," said I bowing, "that if your grandmother was aware of your solicitude for her favourite!"

"Hush, hush," interrupted Mr Twentystone nervously. "Do not speak of my remorse as anything honourable. If my grandmother only knew all, it would make her turn in her grave."

An unpleasant silence here ensued, during which I was attentively considering Sir Edwin's admirable rendering of the creature—a short-nosed, snarling, over-fed, spoiled spaniel as ever I saw.

"The dog is dead, I conclude," observed I presently; "but I remember an advertisement of a missing animal very like him, and answering to the name of Charlie," appearing in the *Times* for many months in succession."

"For years," responded Mr Twentystone hoarsely. "People say that the breed of King Charles's spaniels is growing scarce. I can only say that many hundreds have been brought to this house in answer to that advertisement, and every one of them answering to the same name."

"This class of dog is very like one another—if I may use such an expression—don't you think it possible that her missing favourite may have been brought back to Mrs Norton, without recognition?"

"No," returned Mr Twentystone in a sepulchral tone. "Sir, you unwittingly torture me by these suggestions. Perhaps it will be better to reveal all at once. A knowledge of the greatness of the wrong which I have to repair, may incite you to use your best efforts in the present undertaking. Sit down, sir, and fix your eyes upon that unhappy fellow-creature, while you listen to his history from the lips of his involuntary assassin. Do not mistake the cause of my emotion, Mr Senotaff; I have played the hypocrite long enough already. I never cared for Charlie—no, not *tuppence*; but I did regard his mistress, who has left me all that you see around me, and two thousand a year in the Three per Cents. 'You always loved dear Charlie,' said she, within a few hours of her dissolution, 'and you have done your very best, Felix, to discover his mysterious fate.' And yet he had been lying for nearly seven years in my own wine-cellar, in Albany Crescent, rolled in sheets of lead. Ah, I feel that lead at my heart now. It was in this very drawing-room in February '56 that the catastrophe happened. I had come down from town to stay with my grandmother as usual from the Saturday to the Monday, and arrived a little before dusk. The cypress, however, helps to make this apartment dark before the others, and when I entered it, it was empty and shrouded in gloom. Had Charlie been in, he would have flown at my calves, I knew. I did not reflect, however, that he might be asleep. Tired with my walk from the railway station, I cast my enormous frame upon this very sofa, and—"

"You sat upon Charlie, sir!" said I, for Mr Twentystone was speechless.

"My employer nodded solemnly. "There was not the slightest noise, Mr Senotaff; no bark, no whine."

"I should think you must have felt as though you needed both those stimulants," observed I gaily, thinking to win this man from his morbid melancholy.

"Do not jest, Mr Senotaff," returned he gravely; "it is impossible to make light of such a calamity. He was flattened out, sir, like an anti-macassar. He was no longer a dog, but a sort of diminutive hearth-rug of exquisite beauty. The weight had been so distributed—or perhaps I had come upon him so suddenly—that he had not had time to burst. Mr Hood describes the same accident to have occurred to a stout gentleman of his acquaintance with respect to a baby. He relates that, happening to hold the infant up *edgeways*, it was *not to be seen at all*. Charlie, however, had too much curly hair for that. I could see him very plainly however I held him, and it became all important that nobody else should do so. In an instant, my intellectual faculties, quickened by despair, suggested my putting him into my pocket. I folded him up in three divisions, like a sheet of letter-paper, and placed him in one of my coat-tails, just as my grandmother entered the room.

"How are you, Felix, dear? Why, where is my poor Charlie?" She was accustomed to speak of the animal as though it was an object of pity, and very much ill-used, but the adjective 'poor' now pricked my conscience to the quick; she little thought how applicable was that word, for once. I had half a mind to produce the—what shall I call it, and exclaim: 'Here is all that is left of him. Pardon, pardon.' I contented myself, however, with replying: 'Dearest grandmother, how should I know? I have not seen the pretty darling for five days.'

"Then those must have seemed ten," returned my aged relative. "Ring the bell, and we'll have him brought in at once; I left him sleeping on the sofa as calm and quiet as a seraph. You know, he has quite lost his troublesome wheezing."

"Quite," said I; which was very true.

"But I need not harrow myself unnecessarily with these details. It is needless to say that Charlie did not appear. His chair and cushion in vain were placed at the dinner-table. He was very near them, but nobody knew that but me. A pet cat, beloved by my grandmother in a very inferior degree to Charlie, but allowed to attend at meal-times, suspected, I am inclined to think, that there was something wrong in my pocket, and sniffed about me in a manner most objectionable, and which fortunately drew the attention of the servant.

"Grimalkin is troublesome, Mr Felix," said he; "I think I had better put him out of the room."

"Yes, take him away," exclaimed my grandmother testily. "I wonder what can have become of my poor dear Charlie."

"I put my hand mechanically to what I may literally call his long home, and lo! there was his tail hanging out, which Grimalkin had cunningly extricated. I muttered something about my handkerchief being on the floor, and tucked it in again; but I shall never recover the shock of that discovery.

"So long as I was in Doddridge Villa, I felt that I was upon a slumbering volcano, and yet I did not dare to leave it before Monday morning; in the meantime, I could not get rid of Charlie's carcass. Could I have dug a hole in the ground, and buried it, that fiend of a cat would have scratched it up. Could I have weighted it with a stone, and cast it into the river, the stream would have given up its

dead, and they would have known that I was the murderer, because it was so very much flattened out. There was nobody else of any weight to speak of in the neighbourhood. I accordingly kept the creature in my coat-tail, taking care, however, not to leave him out to be brushed at night, and as soon as I arrived in town, bought a quantity of lead, and hermetically sealed him up with my own hands, in my wine-cellar.

"It is astonishing how difficult it is to bury a thing in London without exciting suspicion, a thing which I was most solicitous to avoid: a charge of infanticide, however baseless, would have been fatal to my prospects, on account of the incidental fact it would have elicited. Week after week, I returned to my grandmother's house, and comforted her with lying words. I told her that Charlie would be sure to turn up some day, and repay her for all her anxiety by increased affection. I encouraged her to spend about two hundred a year in advertising for him in the papers. Spare me, however, any further description of my shameful behaviour. She has left in her will that one hundred guineas per annum is to be spent upon Charlie's maintenance, if he ever returns to Doddridge Villa; and a part of this legacy, Mr Senotaff, it is my intention to expend upon his mausoleum."

"Mr Twentystone here solemnly rose from the fatal couch, and placed in my hands a cheque, on account, for a very considerable sum.

"You will do your best," said he, "I am sure, for her sake and mine."

"And that is how Charlie's effigy is found among these human memorials," observed Mr Senotaff to the present writer. "Moreover," added he, with a sly smile, as he finished the rounding of his cherub with a few delicate chips, "there are good many folks who deal with me"—chip, chip—"who put up costly monuments, not to dogs, but to men and women"—chip, chip—"whom, like poor Charlie, they have sat upon rather heavily, and even crushed to death."

SEISMOLOGY.

THE late earthquake is no longer a nine days' wonder; we have recovered from our astonishment, and begin to inquire into the causes of such an unwonted visitation. It is rarely that we, in peaceful England, have a practical realisation of these phenomena of nature: we live so far from the regions of volcanic action, that we are hardly aware of the immense extent to which this power is working in other and distant parts of the earth. Should reports of it reach us, as in the case of the Manilla earthquake, we barely notice the fact, because the mind has always difficulty in appreciating things which are far from it, or in which it has no personal interest. For aught that we realise, our earth might be at its centre one solid mass of granite, instead of an ever-perturbed sea of molten matter. The comparative few who travel, reach sunny Italy, bask beneath a cloudless sky, gaze on Vesuvius, climb its rugged sides, and enjoy the signs of happy life around. Yet to most persons this is all. The birds sing, the bees hum, the flowers spring and fade, and the grapes cluster and ripen over what was once a rolling sheet of lava, carrying destruction to homes as peaceful as those which have arisen from the ruins. They know that they stand on the scene of past desolation, but few can bring their minds to believe

that under so fair an exterior the same desolating power is still at work.

A few weeks ago, however, there was a personal verification of known principles. In the dead of night, men were aroused from their slumbers by portentous noises; their beds were upheaved, as if by some animal rousing himself from his lair beneath them; the morning found clocks in hall and study stopped at a given hour; and it was acknowledged that an earthquake had been felt. And perhaps no phenomenon in nature has a more peculiar or startling effect upon the mind than this, because it is antagonistic to all our preconceived notions of the earth's solidity. The firmness of land, as contrasted with the mobility of water, is one of the first lessons we learn in childhood, and a belief in it pervades all parts of creation. Should we therefore find the ground beneath heaving and moving, we have manifested to us a destructive principle, from which there is no escape; fly where we will, we tread upon the 'very focus of destruction.' 'No familiarity can blunt the feeling. The inhabitant of Lima, who, from childhood, has frequently witnessed these convulsions of nature, is aroused from his sleep by the shock, and rushes from his apartment with the cry of *Misericordia!*' This terror is not confined to man; birds fly together in the wildest way; crocodiles, usually immovable in their swampy beds, rush from the river with loud cries into the neighbouring forests, and other animals exhibit a similar dread of the approaching disturbance.

There is a close connection between volcanoes and earthquakes, and little doubt can exist of their springing from the same causes. For this reason, we find geologists confining earthquake-movements to certain regions, or *volcanic bands*, as they are generally termed. These regions give evidence of subterranean heat being at work below, by constant earthquake-shocks, the vicinity of volcanoes, hot springs, and petroleum or other bituminous wells. Thus, at Deception Island, in Tierra del Fuego, where earthquake-shocks are of most constant occurrence (as its name, *Land of Fire*, implies), there are no less than one hundred and fifty chasms or fissures from which steam pours with a loud hissing noise. In fact, the whole island is volcanic, being chiefly formed of cinders, between layers of which the snow of each winter is preserved. The volcanic bands generally correspond with the elevated portions of the continent, running parallel with mountain-chains; and in South America, which of all countries is most subject to convulsions of the earth, the volcanic region traverses the continent along the course of the Andes. The other regions principally subject to earthquakes are lines from the Caspian Sea to the Azores; from the Aleutian Islands to the Moluccas; and from Iceland to Italy.

Of this last band, England forms a link, and though no great convulsion has ever shaken our isle, we have often felt slight shocks in the passage of the earth-wave along the band. Two hundred and twenty-five shocks are enumerated as having been felt in Britain; but, with two or three exceptions, none have been more than tremors of the earth's surface. The greatest known in England occurred in November 1318, but no distinct account has been preserved of it. In 1580, a shock in London was of sufficient severity to shatter part of the Temple Church and St Paul's Cathedral; and again,

in February and March 1750, slighter shocks were felt in the capital. Another shock being predicted for the 8th of April of the same year, thousands of persons, including many of rank, passed the night of the 7th in Hyde Park, either in tents or carriages. Scotland, however, is much more subject to shocks than any other part of the British Isles, and in the rocks of Dumbartonshire and Stirling, there are evident traces of volcanic action. Arthur's Seat, likewise, and the basaltic columns of Staffa, shew how potent has been that force in past days. Of the two hundred and twenty-five earthquakes recorded, one hundred and thirty-nine were felt in Scotland, and of these the greatest part (eighty-five), and also the most violent, occurred in Perthshire. This county seems to have a more intimate connection with volcanic action than any part of our country, for scarcely a year passes without one or more earthquakes being felt there.

But it is only by comparing our experience of terrene convulsions with those felt in other lands, that we can estimate the slightness of our acquaintance with them, and the blessing we enjoy in being so far from their influence. From the earliest ages, there are records of fearful destruction, overwhelming whole districts by their agency. In 742, an awful earthquake occurred in Syria, Palestine, and Asia, by which more than three hundred towns were destroyed, and no calculation could give any idea of the immense loss of life on that occasion. In two instances, Pekin has been almost depopulated by earthquakes. In 1662, when China was ravaged by one, in Pekin alone three hundred thousand persons were buried in ruins; again, within this century, one hundred thousand of the inhabitants of that city were swallowed up by cleavage of the earth. China has always been peculiarly subject to severe earthquakes, probably from the fact that there is no active volcano in the whole country; and one of the most remarkable on record, as regards duration, commenced in 1333, and continued during ten years! All of us have heard of the destruction which befell Lisbon on the 1st of November, one hundred and eight years ago. We are acquainted with the circumstances of the inhabitants being in the cathedral and churches on the day of All-Saints, when a subterranean thunder was heard, and whole streets were swallowed up; while, according to some accounts, fifty thousand beings were engulfed in the earth. But beyond these well-known particulars, this earthquake was eminent in scientific interest, for its effects were observed in so many places, as to afford more accurate data on the velocity of earth-waves, &c., than is usually obtained from such transient and terror-striking occurrences. The movement of the Lisbon earthquake was felt over a space nearly equal to one-twelfth of the earth's surface; no less than seven hundred thousand square miles of land and sea were agitated by this gigantic convulsion of nature. In Sweden and Germany, in every inland lake on the shores of the Baltic, in the Canadian lakes, and in the West Indies, where many of the islands were overflowed, far and near, the vibratory motion extended. In consequence of its exciting such a powerful influence on all the lakes of Sweden, Scotland, and America, its focus is supposed to have been in the submarine centre of the Atlantic Ocean. 'The hot springs of Toplitz dried up and returned, inundating everything around, and having their waters coloured with iron ochre. At Cadiz, the sea rose

to an elevation of sixty-four feet; whilst in the Antilles, where the tide usually rises only from twenty-six to twenty-eight inches, it suddenly rose above twenty feet, the water being of an inky blackness.' At Kinsale, on the Irish coast, the waves rolled into the harbour, and overflowed the market-place; and at Funchal in Madeira, they rose thirteen feet above the highest water-mark. In fact, the recedence of the sea after the enormous wave which broke over the whole coast of Spain and Portugal, washing away the desolated ruins of Lisbon, swept quite across the Atlantic, spending its final strength on the shores of America. Another account gives a singular evidence, in our own country, of how the whole of nature was perturbed by this phenomenon. 'At the hot well at Bristol, the water suddenly became as red as blood, and so very turbid that it could not be drunk. The water also of a common well, which had been remarkably clear, at once turned as black as ink, and continued unfit for use nearly a fortnight. The tide likewise in the river Avon flowed back, contrary to its natural course, and various other effects of some unknown convulsion in the bowels of the earth were perceived in different places. But all conjectures as to the cause of these extraordinary circumstances were vain, until the news arrived of the earthquake of Lisbon having happened on the same day, which gave a satisfactory solution to these several phenomena.'

It is now an acknowledged fact, that the cause of earthquakes is *internal heat* in our globe. Upon the proofs and evidence of this igneous state of the centre of our planet, it is needless to touch; but it being a received hypothesis, we can draw conclusions from it as to the origin of earthquakes and volcanic action. The question involved is not the internal heat of the earth, but what causes give local excitement to the interior, and produce these phenomena. The most plausible theory is the one adopted by Humboldt, and supported by Leibnitz; this is, 'that if the earth be now generally hot within, it must have been hotter; and in the process of cooling, the exterior solidified, and the interior fluid parts contract unequally; a general pressure and tension result, and the crust breaks locally, to restore the equilibrium.' Supposing that beneath a tract of land, strongly evincing volcanic agency (as in South America), there is a vast internal sea of melted rock, and that from this mass of molten matter gases are evolved, their endeavours to escape would produce the undulations, upheaval, and other movements observable in an earthquake, and finally, they would make their exit in fissures, or in the craters of volcanoes. The pent-up gaseous matter in the Lisbon earthquake found vent in a vast rent in the rock of Alvidras, from which flames and smoke ascended, and it was observed that as the subterranean noise increased in intensity, the smoke arising from the fissure became more dense. Although earthquakes may occur beyond the region of volcanoes, or without apparently causing an eruption in one if near, they must then be regarded as more dangerous; for volcanoes being outlets by which the internal heat of the earth can escape, are looked upon as safety-valves, and when adjacent to an earthquake, modify its violence. During the very severe earthquake of Cutch in June 1819, the shocks lasted for four days, and extended to Poonah, a distance of four hundred miles. But at the end of that time, a volcano situated thirty miles from the scene of the

most violent shocks burst forth into an eruption, and the convulsions immediately ceased. This earthquake is notorious for its permanent effect on the surrounding land. Near the fort and village of Sindree, a tract of land, two thousand square miles in area, subsided, and the sea rushing in, converted it into an immense inland lake or lagoon. Close at hand, another tract of land, thirty miles in length, and in some parts sixteen feet wide, was raised in one night ten feet above its former level, and now extends across the plain as the *Ullah Bund*, or Wall of God, as the natives appropriately named it. One of the towers of the fort at Sindree, though shaken violently by the disturbances around, still remains to mark the former site of the village. When Sir Alexander Burnes visited it in 1828, he went to examine the ruins in a boat, and as far as the eye could see across the water, the faint line of the Ullah Bund was alone visible. 'This scene,' says Lyell, 'presents to the mind a lively picture of the revolutions now in progress in the earth—a waste of waters where a few years before all was land, and the only land that is visible consisting of ground uplifted by an earthquake.' This was not the only singular effect of this convulsion. The eastern channel of the Indus was so shallow as to be fordable at Luckput, being at low water only one foot deep; but after the shock, the bed of the river was depressed eighteen feet, and rendered navigable.

Thus we see how the eruption of a volcano may be the end of an earthquake, and the exit of the gases and fluids which produce the disturbance. Should any of the volcanoes in South America cease to smoke, the inhabitants immediately prepare for, and anxiously anticipate violent *terremotos* or convulsions; and on the occasion of the terrific earthquake of Riobamba, the same connection was observable. For months, a column of smoke had arisen from the volcano of Pasto; this suddenly disappeared on the 4th of February 1799, and on the same day the city of Riobamba was destroyed, though distant from the mountain nearly two hundred miles. Again, earthquakes may either raise the ground in tracts, as the Ullah Bund, or in mountains. As another example of the former effect, we may notice that after the destructive earthquake of November 1822, which simultaneously shattered towns over an area of twelve hundred miles, the coast near Valparaiso was raised three or four feet above the mean level for a distance of one hundred miles. 'If we suppose this elevation to have been only three feet on an average, it will be seen that the mass of rock added to the continent of America by the movement, or, in other words, the mass previously below the level of the sea, and after the shock permanently raised above it, must have exceeded seventy-five cubic miles in bulk, which would be sufficient to form a conical mountain two miles high—or about as high as Etna—with a circumference at the base of thirty-three miles; and assuming the great pyramid of Egypt to weigh six million tons, the rock raised would exceed in weight three hundred and sixty-three million pyramids!'

The highest mountain which was ever known to be raised in a few hours is Aconagua, near Valparaiso, which in a single night attained a height of twenty-four thousand feet. Another noted instance is that of Jorullo, and its five fellow-cones, which is now the most celebrated of the Mexican volcanoes. In the broad plain of

Jorullo, the inhabitants were greatly disquieted with earthquakes and subterranean noises from the 29th of June to the 28th of September in the year 1759, and during this time the subterranean thunder continued without cessation. 'The eruption of this new volcano, about three o'clock in the morning, was foretold the day before by a phenomenon, which, in other eruptions, does not indicate their commencement, but their conclusion. At the point where the greatest volcano now stands, there was formerly a thick wood of the guagava, so much valued by the natives on account of its excellent fruit. Labourers from the sugar-cane fields of the Hacienda de San Pedro Jorullo, belonging to the rich Don Andrea Pimentel, who was then living in Mexico, had gone out to collect the fruit of the guagava. When they returned to the farm (*hacienda*), it was remarked with astonishment that their large straw-hats were covered with volcanic ashes. Fissures had consequently already opened in what is now called the *Malpais*, probably at the foot of the high basaltic dome *El Cuiche*, which threw out these ashes (*rapilli*) before any change appears to have occurred in the plain.' This circumstance preserved the lives of the slender population: the Father Isidore who had been sent from the Jesuits' College of Patzcuaro to offer spiritual consolation to the people long disturbed by earthquakes, suspected some volcanic convulsion would end all these rumblings, and hurried the inhabitants off from the plain to the hill of Aguasarco. From this eminence they beheld, on the following day, the plain where they had so long dwelt in peace, rent and torn by fiery fissures and fearful convulsions, from which were thrown up scoria, sand, great masses of rock, and muddy water. 'In the midst of the flames there appeared, like a black castle, a great shapeless mass.' And, continues the Spanish account, 'before the terrible mountain made its appearance, the earthquakes and subterranean noises became more frequent; but on the day of the eruption itself, the flat soil was seen to rise perpendicularly, and the whole became more or less inflated, so that blisters appeared, of which the largest is now the volcano.' Over this once convulsed spot, tranquillity now reigns, and the ground is covered with salvias, dahlias, and other Mexican plants in ever-succeeding bloom. But still, in proof of what has been, rises Jorullo, nearly 1700 feet high, and round it stand the five other mountains which rose from the earth simultaneously with it. Humboldt says: 'I saw the black volcano projected very picturesquely above the innumerable white columns of smoke from the "little ovens" (*hornitos*) which surround it.' The popular idea among the natives is, that the muddy water which was ejected was that of two brooks which now pass under the *hornitos*, and reappear as two thermal springs. Certain it is that the water of the springs is now of a temperature of 126°, and that they retain the original names of the brooks which flowed through the cane-fields of the plain. It was the opinion of Leopold von Buch, that the 'hornitos are not cones accumulated by erupted matters; they have been upheaved directly from the interior of the earth.'

Having admitted the probable cause of earthquakes to be condensed gases, vapour, and elastic fluids, we must resign all hope of obtaining more than vague suppositions as to how these volcanic agents are produced, and what is still more perplexing, how the crust of the earth, which at the thickest part is but a thin shell, can resist this

mighty force. The source of this destructive power lies miles below our feet, and we have no means of gaining information as to its origin, extent, or whether the molten mass from which we imagine it proceeds is ever at rest, or only disturbed at distant periods of time.

The motion of the ground during an earthquake has been variously described—by some as a tremor, by others as a succession of short spasmodic movements, and the undulatory motion similar to that which would be produced by 'standing on a plank, the ends of which rose and fell two feet from the ground.' Technically speaking, earth-waves are divided by geologists into three kinds—horizontal, as in the Chilean earthquake of 1835; vertical, such as the Lisbon earthquake; and rotatory, the rarest and most dangerous of terrene movements. To this last motion was added the horrors of cleavage of the earth at Riobamba; on which occasion, the following phenomena were noticed by Don José Cavanilles, from whose account the following particulars are taken. Fissures were alternately opened and closed again, so that men saved themselves from sinking into them by extending both arms. Entire caravans of riders and loaded mules disappeared through transverse fissures in their path, whilst others, fleeing back, escaped the danger. At times, the elevation and depression of the ground were such, that during the oscillations, people who were standing upon the choir of a church at a height of more than twelve feet, got upon the pavement of the street without falling. Massive houses were sunk; and for two whole days before the inhabitants were released by excavations, they could open inner doors, passed uninjured from room to room, procured lights, fed upon supplies accidentally discovered, and disputed with each other regarding the probability of their rescue. Translatory movements in a horizontal direction also occurred, by which avenues of trees became displaced without being uprooted; and a still more remarkable phenomenon is the discovery of utensils belonging to one house under the ruins of another at a great distance—a circumstance which has given rise to lawsuits. Had such accounts been from a less authentic source than that of the Baron von Humboldt, they would have seemed incredible; and even after what we have said respecting the extraordinary convulsions produced by earthquakes, we naturally echo the query of that learned man: Is it, as the natives believe, a sinking followed by an eruption? that should move the contents of one house far away under the ruins of another.

Mr Darwin has suggested, in connection with the South American earthquakes, which are of every-day occurrence, and therefore commonly unattended by any volcanic action—1. That the primary shock of an earthquake is caused by a violent rending of the strata, which, on the coast of Chili and Peru, seems generally to occur at the bottom of the neighbouring sea. 2. That this is followed by minor fractures, which, though extending upwards, do not, except in submarine volcanoes, actually reach the surface. 3. That the area thus fissured extends parallel, or approximately parallel, to the neighbouring coast mountains. 4. That the earthquake relieves the subterranean force *precisely in the same manner as an eruption through an ordinary volcano.*

The first of Mr Darwin's four suggestions—that the violent rending of the strata is commonly submarine, offers a connection with the great tidal

waves, which have been so frequently experienced in earthquakes near the sea. In these, the sea appears to retire from the shore, and then gather itself into one mighty wave, sometimes (as at Lisbon) sixty feet high, breaking over the land, and sweeping all away before it. Earthquakes may either be propagated along the sea-bottom, or starting from the midst of the bed of the ocean, produce rolling and swelling of the waves. Occasionally, these shocks may be felt out at sea as well as on land. There is one instance, during the Lisbon earthquake, of men being thrown eighteen inches into the air on board a ship, far from land; and also on another occasion, an English vessel, sailing from Liverpool to Bombay, when in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, between the coasts of Africa and South America, experienced a shock which seemed as if the keel passed over a coral-reef, but on sounding, no bottom was found at a depth of one hundred and twenty fathoms.

The motion given to the earth's surface by the tumultuous gases in the interior has been described as similar to that produced by a wave of air under a long cloth. If you raise one end, and drop it suddenly, the air beneath will travel to the opposite side, producing undulations of the surface. Just in this way, the waves of commotion traverse the solid mass of the earth, which has in all its parts a certain degree of elasticity, though varying according to the difference in geological structure. The rate of progression of earth-waves through rock and strata varies, of course, according to their respective density or elasticity; and although this part of the science of seismology has been mathematically investigated, no certain rates of variation have as yet been determined; indeed, the peculiarities of the progression of earth-waves are singular in the extreme. The propagation generally advances in a lineal direction, but its velocity by no means agrees with the violence of the commotion. In the earthquake of July 1846, which was felt in Germany, the velocity of the earth-waves was ascertained to be about 15 geographical miles in a minute, or 1500 feet in a second; while the earthquake at Lisbon produced a varying rate of fifty to eighty English miles per minute. As an estimate of the violence of the great sea-wave of November 1, 1755, may be mentioned the fact, that it rolled into Barbadoes at the rate of 73 miles per minute, having traversed the deepest part of the Atlantic Ocean. A curious circumstance is recorded in *St George's Chronicle*, in the island of Granada, West Indies, of the effects of an earthquake, which was felt there on the 18th of January 1844. Those clocks of which the pendulums oscillated from east to west, were almost all stopped, while those whose pendulums vibrated north and south, were not affected. It is also mentioned that the needles of the compasses on board the *Thames* steamer, which was then among those islands, revolved on their centres with great rapidity during the convulsions.

It soon became of interest to measure the direction and intensity of these waves of commotion, and the simple method of a basin containing some thick liquid, as treacle, was thought of. But, of course, in time, ingenious instruments were devised, the most perfect of which is invented by M. Kriegl of Vienna, and described, if not improved upon, by Mr Mallet. It consists of a pendulum oscillating in every direction, but unable to turn on its point of suspension; it bears at its extremity a cylinder, which, by means of mechanism in it, turns on its

vertical axis once in twenty-four hours. Next to the pendulum stands a rod, bearing a narrow elastic arm, which slightly presses the extremity of a lead-pencil against the surface of the cylinder. As long as the pendulum is quiet, the pencil traces an uninterrupted line on the surface of the cylinder; but as soon as it oscillates, the line becomes interrupted and irregular, and these irregularities indicate the time of the commencement of an earthquake, together with its direction and intensity.

Earthquakes are generally preceded or followed by subterranean noises, which vary in character, intensity, and duration. As in the shock which we lately experienced in this country, the sound may resemble the rumbling of a very heavy vehicle, or artillery-wagon, at a rapid rate over a stone pavement; or it may be like a sudden thunder-clap in the bowels of the earth. But the intensity of the noise does not seem to have any connection with the force of the shock, and depends to a great extent upon the character of the soil, which influences the propagation of sound, and may conduct it ten or twelve times faster than air. During the earthquake of 1797, which damaged Quito, and destroyed Riobamba, no sound was heard at the latter place, but a tremendous noise was heard at Quito twenty minutes after the convulsion was over. The same peculiarity was observed at the destruction of Lima, when a quarter of an hour after the earthquake, an awful sound, as of a clap of thunder, was heard, but no movement of the ground was perceived. That the waves of sound may be propagated over an immense area, was evinced during the volcanic eruption in St Vincent's Island in 1812, where, at 'two o'clock in the morning, a noise like the report of cannons was heard, without any sensible concussion of the earth, over a space of one hundred and sixty thousand geographical square miles.' The shock of an earthquake may be instantaneous, or continue with diminishing force for weeks or months. Sometimes they occur periodically, or, as in the Aleutian Islands, are of daily occurrence. Indeed, wherever they are, we may feel thankful that we are not within the limits of their force. The town of Concepcion alone has been totally destroyed by earthquakes three times during the last hundred years; and it is computed that from 1783 to 1857, the kingdom of Naples lost at least one hundred and eleven thousand inhabitants by the effects of earthquakes, or more than fifteen hundred per year out of a population of six millions!

OCCASIONAL NOTE

CHARGES AGAINST THE SCOTCH BY ONE OF THEMSELVES.

MR COCHRANE, first-minister of Cuper (successor to the father of the Lord Chancellor Campbell), lately delivered a lecture, in which he contrasted the habits of the English with those of the Scotch on occasions when they meet in large crowds. What the reverend gentleman said was at first somewhat misreported; and he found it necessary to explain, through the *Times*, that he did not acquit the English commonalty of a tendency to drunkenness, while condemning his own countrymen on the same account. It is admitted, however, that he described himself as having lately mingled in three great crowds in England—one of them at a Lord Mayor's show—and he was struck by the jokes, the cheery and amusing remarks, which he heard going on, without any bad or provoking language; whereas, at hiring-markets in

Scotland, a beastly intoxication, leading to blasphemous and obscene language, was pretty sure to prevail. We can corroborate the statement of Mr Cochrane regarding hiring-markets by observations made within the last twenty years. The men and women drink whisky copiously, and very indecent scenes are the consequence. One also hears frequently in Scotland of railway excursion-parties misconducting themselves, and becoming a nuisance in the places which they visit.

The truth is, that, notwithstanding the long continuance of a system of popular education in Scotland, its people are—to use a mild expression—rougher than the people of England, amongst whom schools have only been established in our own time. The explanation is, that school-learning and civilisation are not the same thing. The Scotch are a more instructed people than the English—we have somewhere seen it stated that only 2 per cent. are unable to read. The English, however, have been some centuries longer under the influence of law and order. Their moral feelings, and the tendency to refined and cleanly habits, have consequently got time to come into vigour amongst them. The peasant Englishman will not strike an adversary when he is down; with the peasant Scots, the maxim which rules brawls is, that 'the thickest skin stands longest out.' Cleanliness has long asserted her reign amongst the English peasantry; it has not yet had time to do so amongst the Scotch. It appears, in short, that, even with the aid of the active religious system now some centuries established in Scotland, the original rudeness is not yet nearly so much rubbed out as it is amongst their southern neighbours. It is no fault of either the educational or the religious system of the country; speaking liberally, it is no fault of the people themselves. It all arises from this, that a people do not pass at one stride from lawlessness and dirt to order and tidiness; it is a process that requires time and a considerable series of generations.

Doubtless, there are local and special influences that somewhat control the general truth here laid down. The convivialities of the Scotch have been immensely debased during the last hundred years by the use of whisky instead of ale. Through its quick operation in inflaming their minds, it has helped greatly to retard the progress of refinement and meekness; it is to a great extent blamable for that coarse behaviour at fairs and on railway-excursions which is the main subject of Mr Cochrane's remarks. If the Scotch would only go back to their twopenny ale, which Burns commends so much, it would be greatly to the advantage of their reputation as a people, though perhaps not enough to satisfy the more ardent class of reformers.

PROSPECTUS.

During the first twelve years' existence of Chambers's Edinburgh Journal, the sole complaint made against it, as its editors honestly believe, was with respect to its inconvenient and bulky form. A change was consequently effected in this respect, but in no other. The same principles under which it was conducted, with a popularity unexampled at that time in periodical literature, distinguished it in its new shape. Avoiding mere controversial topics, it endeavoured to amuse, to instruct, and elevate; and there is good ground for entertaining the opinion that in those objects it succeeded.

Again, a change seemed to be called for in the externals of the Journal, and after that

lapse of time which is requisite in such cases for ascertaining the wishes of so many thousands, it was conceded.

Once more, after an existence longer, by many years, than that of which any rival periodical can boast, it enters upon a new phase.

In the series now commencing, Chambers's Journal will be printed in a larger and clearer type than formerly; the contents, which, it is hoped, will be found as various as excellent, will be contributed by first-class writers; subjects of passing interest will receive more systematic notice than it has been hitherto found possible—by reason of certain mechanical hindrances which have of late been removed—to give them; books of valuable and sterling character will receive ample attention; and yielding to the wishes of a large section of readers, there will be a more frequent introduction of Serial Tales, selected without reference to the prestige of literary names, but on account of their own intrinsic merit.

A WISH.

DREARY are the nights in winter,
When the north winds blow,
Shouting, shaking at the casement,
With a mighty woe—

Panting, sobbing through the darkness
Like a child that grieves;
Moaning at the doorway—creeping
Low, about the eaves.

But to-night the snow is lying
In a still moon-light—
O my Love—whom Death has hidden,
Visit me to-night!

Can you hear me through the raptures
Of the shining fields?
Where the waste of rose and lily,
Breath of Eden yields;

Where you walk with troops of spirits
Purged from earthly tears—
Can you hear? For one short vision,
I would linger years.

Come, my Love! the snow is shining;
You may walk in white,
As upon the floor of heaven,
If you come to-night—

Not a print of mortal treading—
It is chastely meet—
You may walk, nor fear the soiling
Of your gentle feet.

Come! the dawn will shine upon it,
The great face of day—
Like a dream—in tears and silence,
It will melt away.

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